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## HOW SOLOMON WAS WISE

No man who ever lived has held among so many races and such varied stages of civilization so general a repute for wisdom as the son of David and Bathsheba. If ever the familiar canon of assurance regarding what has been held everywhere, always and by all, may be adduced to preclude argument it must justify our belief in Solomon's wisdom. Oriental fancy loved to play around his "glory", as with that of Al Raschid, and attributed to him wealth such as only jinns from their supernatural treasures might supply. He becomes the fountainhead of proverbial philosophy, a poet compelling his harp to most diverse excellences in idyllic dialogues of loves and hymns of exalted praise. He is also the ideal *kadi*, a dispenser of justice marvellous in the shrewdness with which he smilingly untangles the knots of oriental legalistic casuistry. The flights of Arabian and Persian fancy in the full efflorescence of the Solomon saga have been laboriously traced by Dr. Salzberger and entertainingly followed by Dr. Mardrus.<sup>1</sup> Yet what was, in fact, the basis of this renown? What did Solomon really do to entitle him to undying remembrance even among those who realize that in much of what is told of his power, his glory and his wealth the wish has been father to the thought, an illusion of a consoling racial dream?

Solomon guided the fortunes of Israel for forty years of such peace and accumulation of the evidences of wealth as that people had never seen. He devised more ways of gathering precious things and exploited these ways more resourcefully than any other Hebrew ruler. He expended his wealth and the labor of his people more lavishly than any other both for courtly display and for monumental works, doubly impressive to less happily circumstanced succeeding generations. To the politicians and economists among these, if such there were, Solomon may well have seemed to have overshot the mark or overstrained the bow in taxation and levies, for his death found his

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<sup>1</sup>G. Salzberger: *Die Salomo Saga in der semitischen Litteratur*, Berlin, 1907; J. Mardrus: *Salomo et la reine de Saba*, Paris, 1918.

own people ripe for division and his vassals for rebellion. He had been the shrewd and diplomatically pacific exploiter of a situation which international conditions had enabled his father's valor and political insight to create, but his own policies had so far undermined that situation during forty years of peace that at his death his realm had lost much of what had made its splendor possible and was, in its divided estate, about to shrink within the boundaries that had confined it under King Saul. If, however, on its political and material side the wisdom of Solomon had been that of an oriental profiteering prince, he had used his unique position to evoke spiritual forces essential to national cohesion. This, since it made his reign cardinal in the history of a race in which the ethical potential was greatest, still vindicates for Solomon a preëminent title to wisdom.

The domain of united Israel, "from Dan to Beersheba", as David received it from Saul, was an agricultural and pastoral princedom of some six thousand square miles, more often arid than fertile, poor in metals, without important manufactures or general economic significance. But in the north and at the southwest it was crossed by trade routes of primary importance and it lay close to other caravan tracks which for centuries had been prizes of conquest, Egyptian and Assyrian. Now, however, just at the opening of the tenth pre-Christian century, both these powers were in a period of decline or relaxation, so that there was room among the minor intervening peoples for readjustments, and even opportunity for unobtrusive expansion. David was the man for such an occasion. Having shrewdly selected for his almost impregnable capital a city foreign in tradition to both parts of now united Israel and thus apt to provoke the jealousy of neither, he had put an enduring check on the aggressions of the Cretan Philistines to the west, had subjected the Edomites to the south, chastised marauding Moabites and Ammonites to the east, gaining rich and needed grain lands thereby, and had made his power felt in Aramæan states to the north as far as the Abana, putting 'garrisons' in Damascene territory, although apparently never ruling in or beyond Damascus.

All David's domain was, however, not under equal or uncontested control. Even within the traditional boundaries of

Israel, a few miles north of Gennesareth, his rebellious son Absalom found a 'king' and a refuge unchallenged for three years. Later this same restless prince is discovered conspiring at leisure at Hebron, only twenty miles from Jerusalem. With one neighbor only had David peace all his days,—Tyre, the great trading state of the Zidonians, goal or source of the larger part of the traffic through Palestine, whose people dwelt proverbially "quiet and secure", shrewd traders, good customers, un-aggressive, yet able to resent aggression.

The control of caravan routes, the power to take toll for their protection and to get profit from the sale of supplies and the trade incident to this, had formed time out of mind a regular, often the chief and most dependable, source of revenue for most Syrian and Arabian princes. David was able to pass to his son control of essential parts of the chief highways of trade from the Nile to the Tigris, with Syria and Phœnicia on the way, as well as from Arabia, with its spiceries and incense, to Damascus, Tyre, Gaza, and so to the whole Mediterranean, whose waters from end to end were already ploughed with "ships of Tarshish", while David's people had no harbors of importance save those acquired by his Edomite conquests toward the Red Sea, which the Tyrian king was presently to help Solomon to use to their great mutual profit, if indeed he was not first to comprehend their international value and importance.

From time immemorial the main trade routes in and near Palestine had remained unchanged. The Midianite merchants, Joseph's brethren and the Ishmaelites on their way from Gilead to Egypt were following an already familiar track westward through the valley of Jezreel until they should reach an even more frequented road from Babylon and the Euphrates, through what was to be Palmyra, to Damascus, Tyre, Gaza and Egypt. Between Syria and Egypt there is evidence of extensive traffic since at least five hundred years before David's time. A witness to the importance of it is to be seen in the fierce struggles of the Philistines to hold Mickmash, Gilboa and especially "Gibeah of Saul", where a trail from north to south crossed the road from east to west, so that this was a strategic centre for the temporary Philistine occupation. That was what made a sort of 'Tell-act'

out of Jonathan's smiting of the foreign garrison there. At Bethshean, afterward Scythopolis, this east-west road crossed the as yet little trodden path along the central plateau to Jerusalem and Hebron, with offshoots to Sechem. It led to the plain of Sharon through Esdrælon, already historic for the struggle of Barak with Sisera, of Gideon with the Midianites, and of Saul with the Philistines. It was still to see the crushing of Josiah by Necho at Megiddo, the dispersion of the hosts of Holofernes, the marchings and countermarchings of Pompey, Antonius, Vespasian and Titus, of Moslem and Greek, of Richard and Saladin. Napoleon and Allenby have traversed it. The Plain of Megiddo made its name a symbol, "Armageddon".

To the west, David's realm included some sixty miles of the road from Gaza to Tyre. To the east, his sphere of influence extended over considerable sections of two ancient caravan trails from Bozrah to Damascus, with connecting although as yet less travelled roads to Hebron by way of Jerusalem and to Samaria. To the south the Cromwellian thoroughness with which the subjection of Edom was prosecuted shows that David already saw there possibilities which Solomon was first to realize, possibly at the instigation of the Tyrian ruler and probably in friendly coöperation, at least at the outset, with the Jerameelite clan and little Misrite kingdom to the west of Edom, although here, in the north-Arabian Negeb, similarity in names and consequent confusion in traditions make much uncertain and obscure. In any case, David's garrisons along the tracks from Elath to Beersheba will have paid for their upkeep many times over, for from the spice-ries of Arabia the heaviest tolls could always be exacted. Even in imperial Roman days it cost, Pliny says, to get a camel-load from Arabia to Gaza a sum equalent to 135 silver dollars.

Although, then, Israel had but one international route across her territory and her capital lay aloof from the main currents of commercial exchange, David's conquests had given his successor opportunity to collect larger revenues than any prince of southern Syria had ever had or was again to have. This was Solomon's chief material inheritance and it was part of his wisdom that he knew how to exploit those advantages from a political point of view, as the sequel proved, even too well.

At Jerusalem David passed unsolved to Solomon an economic problem of lasting difficulty. No large community has ever been or can ever be self-sufficing there. Its non-producing classes in Solomon's days of glory must have been relatively almost as large and exacting as those of Versailles under Louis XIV, and the city as dependent on levies in kind from farmers as was Rome in its heyday. The way in which Solomon organized and distributed this taxation shows him a diligent emulator of the methods of the Pharaohs, alike with tillers and with herdsmen, but unmindful of the difference between a naturally meagre and an annually restored soil. Craftsmen, native or alien 'cunning men', are named only as in the king's employ, and all important commercial transactions were doubtless monopolized by the 'king's merchants', mainly foreigners. Petty business and house to house barter will have been committed to resident aliens, for 'canaans' and 'trader' were to the writers of that day equivalent and doubtless to the people also. In other connections, however, Canaanites appear with the status of serfs, and such peddling 'canaans' may well have been royal agents in little, perhaps on some system of *commenda*, for this was familiar to the Babylonians of Hammurabi, with whose code and trading customs the Mosaic precepts show a curious coincidence. Thus Solomon was in a position to tax goods in transit, to trade with foreigners and to market their goods among his own people. It will have been in furtherance of such traffic as this that David had bestirred himself to establish a standard shekel-weight. As yet, of course, there were no coins.

Solomon did not seek to extend the uncertain bounds of David's kingdom. Indeed, it is said that he once traded twenty border towns for lumber and craftsmen. The fancy of later writers stretched his rule from the Euphrates and Palmyra (Tadmor, Tamar) to Gaza, much as the romancers of a later age magnified the realms of Arthur and of Charlemagne. His economic achievements were, in fact, twofold. He maintained for forty years a guarded peace and well-policed security throughout his sphere, and he brought new life into it by opening a short connection overland between the Mediterranean and the Eastern Ocean, through which, eluding Egyptian monopoly, the riches of "Ophir", that is of

Arabia Felix, Somaliland and probably of the Cochin coast and the Gulf of Cambay, might pass to Gaza and Tyre, depositing golden sands by the way.

At the head of the Gulf of Akaba, the northeastern branch of the Red Sea, where later stood the Roman Berenice and Ælana, were two harbors, Eziongeber and Elath. Here, in association with some Hiram or Hiram, Solomon built and manned ships for a joint trading venture, from which the returns were so rich and strange as to have passed into legend. Unquestionably the later chroniclers supposed, as most commentators since have done, that the only Hiram in view was the king of Tyre, who certainly had ship-timber of the best in Lebanon, skilled shipwrights and daring sailors, as well as a spirit of commercial enterprise which would grasp eagerly at a trade alliance which promised Phœnicia access to Arabian, East African and possibly Indian markets, without the exactions of Egyptian monopoly. Caravan tracks from Elath to southwestern Arabia and the Nile Delta added to the value of that port and junction point for Solomon and for the North Arabian princes under whose control there was then also good ship-timber on the slopes of Mount Seir, Gebalon.

Judgment as to Solomon's activity at Elath and of his foreign relations in general is obscured by the ambiguity of names in the old tradition and by the perplexities into which this ambiguity has led translators from the Greeks onward. It is reasonably certain that regions in Egypt, North Arabia and North Syria had then names so like as to be readily confounded. Wherever these names occurred in the old records they have been translated 'Egypt', although in several cases it is probable, and in one reasonably certain, that one of the other 'Musri' is meant. The king of the North Arabian Misrites had the title of 'Pir'u', which might readily become the 'Pharaoh' of our version; 'Hiram' could as well represent the Hebraising of a name for the head of the Jerameel clan as of that for the Phœnician prince at Tyre, and, once the ambiguity had arisen, it would be easy to confuse Lebanon with Gebalon and Gezer with Geshur. Professor Winkeler and Canon Cheyne have shown what new meaning and interest such conjectures suggest in what has hitherto been

perplexing or obscure. What issues are involved for a judgment of Solomon's policies and wisdom can alone be indicated here.

If timber for the ships built at Elath came, as would be most convenient, from neighboring Gebalon, Solomon, however the Jerameelites may have assisted, was surely the originator and guiding spirit of the enterprise. But no Hiram-Jerameel could have furnished shipwrights or sailors, and if the Tyrian Hiram had any part in this stage of the undertaking it was surely the leading one. Perhaps it is mere accident that no word for 'port' survives in Biblical Hebrew. Possibly Solomon, having secured safe access to the Red Sea and arranged for a supply of timber, turned both to use with business shrewdness in negotiations with the Tyrian ruler, who could employ them to better advantage than any other. Edomite survivors of David's conquest were naturally jealous of an encroachment on their accustomed caravan tolls and of the opening of a new channel of trade. Their feelings, as naturally, were shared by the Egyptians, for a port at Elath menaced their monopoly of all trade associated with the names 'Ophir' and 'Punt'. The Pharaohs showed their sentiments by harboring the Edomite fugitive Hadad until times should be propitious for revolt in his former domain. Later, as significantly, they associated with him the Israelite royal pretender Jeroboam.

The Red Sea ventures were perforce suspended some time before Solomon's death and Edom regained the exploitation of her caravans. But the richness of the prize was remembered. Jehosaphat, recovering control of the route to Elath, made "ships of Tarshish" (rather, perhaps, "an oared ship", that is, a pentaconter) "to go to Ophir for gold". But, whether by storms or by enemies, "the ships were broken at Eziongeber". King Amasiah subdued Edom once more and Uzziah "restored Elath". But before that energetic king could put it to use the tribesmen won back their independence and the maritime history of Israel came to a close.

Solomon's career as overseas trader, if brief, was brilliant. The first voyage is said to have brought the royal partners such gain that Solomon's share in gold alone was four hundred and twenty talents. These, if of the normal weight, would suffice to



coin nearly thirteen million gold dollars. Later each partner is said to have maintained his own ship or 'navy', which from a three years' voyage brought, beside gold and silver, ivory, gems, almug trees, apes and peacocks. That all these were native to some one 'Ophir' seems assumed. It is much more probable that they were acquired from traders, East Indian and Axomite, in some port or ports of southwest Arabia. But, in any case, by this trading, supplemented by the tolls and traffic of caravans, Solomon made gold rarely plentiful and silver "as stones" in Jerusalem, while maintaining a mercenary army more than self-supporting, judiciously distributed in fortified posts throughout his sphere of influence, always on the paths of caravans. With what commodities he traded for the precious metals and curious exotic goods does not appear. But the Phœnicians were experienced in tempting foreign tastes with their metal and toilet wares which they would gladly have supplied to Solomon in return for Palestine's surplus of foods, wine, oil and, above all, balm.

Solomon also engaged in import and transit business overland. Our translators make him bring horses, chariots and linen yarn from Egypt, but the original text is obscure and was apparently already unintelligible to the Greek 'Seventy' who knew nothing of 'yarn'. There are intrinsic improbabilities. Linen in Israel must always have been restricted by climate to uses of ritual and luxury. Egyptians were such adepts in weaving it that in this material Israelite house industry could have offered only a very halting competition. Chariots the Egyptians had in plenty, but their monuments had already repeatedly expressed esteem for those made by Canaanite artisans in Bethshean, Jezreel and Megiddo, which also had vastly impressed the Israelites when they met Sisera. Horses, too, the Egyptians bred, but they seem to have prized more those which they imported from North Syria and Cilicia, where a horse-breeding region shared Lower Egypt's name of 'Musri'. It is clear, too, that the Greek translators had before them some word that suggested Cilicia. It will have been doubtless from this region that the horses were brought, and possibly chariots with them, which the king's merchants "received at a price", whether conventional, con-

tractual or as commutation of tribute does not appear. Solomon needed horses in great numbers, for he was developing cavalry both for use at his trade 'garrisons' and for display. Surplus stock he resold to northern princes, Hittite and Syrian. A horse is said to have cost Solomon an hundred and fifty silver shekels, which, if these were of the usual heavier sort, would equal in weight about one hundred silver dollars. A 'chariot', probably the double span of four for a chariot, cost him six hundred shekels.

Questions of Solomon's relations with 'Egypt' all have bearing on those connected with the 'Pharaoh's daughter', Solomon's diplomatically honored wife, and on the temper in which the Egyptian Pharaoh entertained Hadad and Jeroboam at his court. For centuries, and until about an hundred years before Solomon's accession, Egypt had controlled all or nearly all of Palestine. For the moment, however, it was in no position to interfere actively with the plans of so vigorous a king as Solomon. It might even view with favor the development of a buffer state of more than wonted strength between itself and the arch-enemy Assyria. And yet it is hardly credible that an Egyptian pharaoh, at the juncture when his monopoly of eastern trade was menaced by Solomon and Hiram at Elath, should have engaged his daughter in an alliance which did not imply the husband's subordination. Pharaoh was much more likely to wait watchfully aloof than to make ties of marriage or trade-treaty with the new competitor and kingdom. It is tempting to suppose that 'Pharaoh's daughter' was in fact a daughter of the Negeb Misrite 'Pir'u', and that Geshur, which was his to give, not Gezer, which belonged to neither, was the dowry. Further, since persistent legend makes Solomon marry the Queen of Sheba, and Sheba must be sought in North Arabia, it is permissible to conjecture that she and 'Pharaoh's daughter' may be one, the more as her Misrites had of old the repute which is attributed to her of shrewd subtlety and gnomic wisdom. Trading with Egypt, of course, went on as always. Solomon was too good a commercial diplomat to stand in the way of any profit. But in this respect there is no clear record for his reign. Five years after his death Pharaoh Shoshenk (Shishak) was plundering Jerusalem.

Israel produced, at least in later days, a surplus of several foods. Ezechiel knows of its trade at Tyre with "wheat of Minnith and Panag", imported from east of Jordan, and with honey, oil and balm. The oil of Palestine stood high in Egyptian esteem, as did also its fruits, nuts, dates and figs. Egypt wanted its asphalt for embalming, and the world sought its balm, prized both as perfume and as medicine, and worth in Pliny's day twice its weight in silver. There were for export, too, honey, wax and wool. Later the fish of Gennesareth were pickled for foreign epicures and already there may have been tunny fisheries where Zebulun "dwelt at the haven of the sea", that is, Dor. Whatever the exportable surplus might be, Solomon, through his new organization of the provinces for taxation, would secure the major part of it for his 'merchants', usually aliens, and could in turn make profit on the exchange of these goods for the grain which his capital needed and for imports that would minister to the magnificence of his court and temple as well as to the oriental taste of officials who could afford to indulge themselves and their wives with them. Among such "riches in a little room", incense, myrrh, aloes, nard, cinnamon, pearls, corals, ivory and the finer textiles, flaxen and silk, had chief place. Thus it befell that over-stimulated foreign trade tended to exhaust the resources of the land for the benefit of the royal treasury and to give the governors a sterile illusion of wealth at the expense of the governed, in so far anticipating on a small scale the experience of senatorial Rome. The vassal peoples, Edomites, Moabites, Aramæans, Canaanites, and even the Israelites who had been wont to worship, their Jahveh at some high-place, a Beersheba or a Bethel, may have regarded the glories of Solomon's house and temple somewhat as the Delian tributaries of Athens looked at the gold of the Athene Polios or the marbles of the Parthenon. Perhaps, too, they thought the burden inequitably distributed. The capital and the ancestral homes of the royal line, Bethlehem and Hebron, were apparently favored, possibly spared altogether.

To these greater sources of revenue must be added Solomon's income from large, scattered royal domains exploited, in part at least, by labor levies. There were tithes of produce, too, a land-tax, possibly a poll-tax, tributes from vassal neighbors, and, in

the aggregate doubtless most important of all these, "presents at a rate year by year", the customary gifts which have always figured large in the income of oriental princes. The Queen of Sheba's hundred and twenty talents may possibly have been by way of dowry, but King Hiram is said to have given as much and in his turn to have received twenty villages, which a popular pun on the word 'kabul' makes him regard as a 'dirty' or scurvy return for his services. Spoils of war Solomon did not gather. He may have inherited them. But the expenses of David's campaigns and the disorders that interrupted his rule must have precluded large accumulations. Late tradition far outleaps the bounds of possibility in supposing that he left provisions for a temple exceeding the specie reserves of any modern state, supplemented by personal gifts from the king and his courtiers, also in bullion, amounting to hundreds of millions of our gold. But that in some favored year Solomon may have received the 666 talents with which the earlier annalist credits him, an equivalent in weight to twenty million gold dollars, is not incredible. Solomon had been venturesomely shrewd in trading, and keen in taxing. The magnificent pacifier had kept his people out of war, in well-disciplined and garrisoned security. Yet it does not appear that he had made them individually either richer or happier. Why, then, did their children join to acclaim him wise?

It must have been for the use to which he had turned his wealth and their fathers' toil. For a due appreciation of this the size of the region he controlled and the probable number of his subjects are essential factors. It was, at best, a little state between great empires. Without keeping this in mind one might get from the records a quite distorted idea of its economic or social possibilities. We read of a census taken under David's auspices apparently within the traditional limits "from Dan to Beersheba". The report was of 500,000 fighting men in Judah, and 800,000 in Israel. This implies a population of from five to six millions where in our time there have never been over 750,000. In all Syria, of which Palestine makes one of six provinces and occupies about an eighteenth of the area, there were before the late war about 3,675,000. There may have been more in Roman imperial days, hardly in Solomon's. Figures for the army afford

a safer clue. David's bodyguard numbered six hundred. These were, and for centuries later remained, Carian mercenaries, useful and sufficient, as appeared at the killing of Athaliah, to keep the city folk quiet. Their number was not increased. Solomon's cavalry numbered 12,000; his chariots 1,400. Neither proved too many to guard effectively the commercially strategic points in his sphere of influence, to hold in subjection some 150,000 Canaanite serfs, to recruit and control what must have been reluctant levies, such as that of the 30,000 timbermen, serving in monthly *corvées* of 10,000, or those for the mines which the Greek translators say Solomon opened in the Lebanon range, where indeed traces of working may still be found, or for the foundries in the Jordan valley.

Solomon's development of cavalry is significant of his large designs. Their chief stations are named. Hazor guarded the upper valley of the Jordan; Gezer and Baalath were a reminder to Philistia to keep the hard-won peace; Tamar was meant to assure the southern outlet from Hebron to the Red Sea; Beth-Horon-the-Nether supported outposts farther east, guards of the Bozrah-Damascus caravans against Bedawi incursions. The chariots and horsemen were kept naturally in open country. Not till centuries later is there mention of them at Jerusalem. Concentration, whether of soldiers or of people, was more difficult in those days than now, for the cost of transportation of food was far greater and a large part of Palestine could never from its immediate resources support more than a sparse population.

It was indeed a land of small things. One ferry-boat had sufficed David's household when he crossed Jordan to meet Shimei and at his farthest the royal refugee had not been seventy miles from Jerusalem. Gibeah, an Ammonite city, had been tolerated within seven miles of Jerusalem both by Saul and by David. Bethlehem had held a Philistine garrison in David's first years. Two days' stout walking would take one from Jerusalem to Joppa on the Mediterranean and but little more than a day past Jericho to the Jordan. From Jerusalem to Damascus, or from Dan to Beersheba, was about as far as from New York to Baltimore or to Providence, and from Damascus to the Euphrates

not much farther than from New York to Washington. Then, too, the institutions of Israel, for all their resemblance to the Babylonian, were unfavorable to commerce and to foreign connections. Whenever the strong will of a ruler was absent the people tended to withdraw into a somewhat surly isolation. To realize the limitations and hindrances with which Solomon had to contend in his policy of commercial expansion and national concentration is essential to a just estimate of his achievement.

At home Solomon's policy demanded a strongly organized administration, with large increase of court and household officials. Its most fruitful conception, with far wider effects and implications than he can have realized, was the Temple; its most conspicuous result was the monumental group of buildings with which, in normal oriental fashion, he emphasized his royal magnificence and made his capital the pride of his people. Most characteristic of his political opportunism is the temper in which he reconciled his own emphasized worship of Jahveh with the claims to representation at the capital of the cults and rituals of peoples whom he needed or wished to conciliate, of foreign ambassadors, artisans or traders, and of the wives, "Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians and Hittites", whom he accumulated to the same end. The preëminent dignity among these of 'the daughter of Pharaoh' was marked by a little residence apart from the general gynecæum. Each friendly or subjected neighbor was no doubt gratified at the matrimonial honor accorded. That there is no audible rumor of palace intrigue or scandal in this reign, as there was in David's, testifies indirectly to Solomon's domestic wisdom.

The greater part of Solomon's revenues was purposefully used in and about Jerusalem. He had found it notable only as a stronghold. He left it the most conspicuous city of Syria, drawing both population and sustenance from every part of his realm. Much more than that, he had by the temple given Jerusalem the opportunity to become the Holy City for all the forward-looking faiths of the world. The temple was indeed far from being the largest structure on Solomon's acropolis, the David's Burg. It was designed as a dwelling-place for the king's God and for the Ark of his Covenant, not as a gathering-place for

his worshippers. But in its very vacancy there was a solemn, compelling appeal to the sense of mystery, awe of the dimly perceived and of the unseen, while worshippers without, before the still primitive "es-Sakhra", the rock altar of burnt offering, with the Bread of the Presence and the Ark of the Covenant with its overshadowing cherubim beyond, saw more immediately near suggestive symbolic figures which might make men feel as they worshipped here a gathering up at this unique shrine of the varied associations of supplications which from patriarchial days had ascended from long venerated high-places in the land. This bare rock of primitive sacrifice, later replaced, to the grief of the conservative, by a great altar of bronze, stood open to the sky. By it were the once sacred pillars, Jachin and Boaz, a bronze serpent, certain lavers and bulls which may have suggested then, as they have done since, Canaanite or Babylonian ideas. Solomon made no exclusive demand for his temple, or for Jahveh's worshippers. It was years before this holy place made its own unique appeal widely heard or heeded, long before "es-Sakhra" became a truly national altar. But that the House of Israel's God stood always in silent monition above the palace of David's line served essentially to open the Judean mind to the ecumenical vision of Isaiah.

But things other than spiritual were involved in the erection of this temple at Jerusalem. It was seven years in building. The royal palace, a much larger structure, with the special residence of 'Pharaoh's daughter' adjoining, took thirteen. There were also a stately throne-hall, rich with encrusted ivory, an imposing 'hall of pillars' for audiences, and an arsenal and assembly hall, the 'House of Lebanon'. For all of these local limestone was quarried, just as the mason work for the pyramids and palaces of the pharaohs had been, by *corvée*, and the Egyptian architects seem to have imposed their influence on Solomon's. Thus constantly renewed tides of drafted labor ebbed and flowed at the capital and gave new occasion for trade and settlement there. For the upper parts of the buildings, the wainscoting and the pillars, cedar was used. Such timber, not to be had in Judea, was abundant on Lebanon and to be cut also at the other 'Hiram's' Gebalon. From Lebanon timber would

have to be taken, with a little chance of raftage, some twenty miles to the sea at Sidon, thence on the Mediterranean for about 120 miles to Joppa, whence there would be forty miles of quite heavy transport to Jerusalem. Gebalon was nearer but less accessible, for the grades were even worse and the country almost waterless, except toward the great depression of the Dead Sea. For the Second Temple the timber was got, modestly, from the neighboring hills. In any case, Solomon's timber was cut and carried by drafted labor. The consequent mingling of tribesmen must have widened horizons and helped to draw the minds of all to the David's Burg as a sort of palladium of national security.

The magnificence of the king's design called for the best artisans and metal workers. These, at least, Solomon would naturally seek at Tyre, traditionally willing to be all things for trade to all its neighbors in the measure of their strength. To either Hiram payment for timber and for men in wheat and oil would be welcome. How many foreign 'skilled hewers' there were does not appear, but much is told of a foreign metal-worker, another Hiram or Huram, who superintended some notable brass casting and may well have stimulated native and Canaanite 'cunning men' to independent efforts, although the Canaanites, naturally more gifted in metal working, must have been sorely taxed to furnish the eighty thousand axemen and seventy thousand burden-bearers who helped the Israelite levies.

Once built, the temple became, as naturally as any Greek shrine, a royal treasury. Into two hundred 'targets' Solomon is said to have cast a weight of gold equivalent to twelve hundred thousand dollars. These adornments of the temple remained, as did the gold of three hundred shields, representing in weight a hundred and eighty thousand dollars, or the unestimated ivory and gold of the throne, still at the king's disposal. There will have been no more question of a final dedication here than the Athenians felt about the also detachable gold hung on the Athene Polios. Possibly the precious metal of the Tabernacle, twenty-nine talents of gold, approximately equivalent in weight to a million gold dollars, and some hundred talents of silver, with the vessels of gold used in the temple services, would have been



accounted inviolable. In after time, whenever the Temple treasure had been plundered by enemies or taken for tribute or ransom, efforts were made to restore it. But that gold was used in any irrecoverable way for the temple is improbable.

It would appear, then, that if, in oriental fashion, a bullion surplus was to be accumulated Solomon put his to the best possible use. He placed it under the sanction of religion, under guard, under his own eye and where the very conspicuousness of its presence ministered to his prestige and also to that of his people's faith. To expect that even so shrewd a ruler as Solomon should use his gold as a basis of credit is to look for a financial forward leap impossible even to such wisdom as his. Gold and silver, where not impounded in this way, tended constantly to slip into foreign hands, chiefly Phœnician.

The use of specie reserves which was thus inaugurated for Israel may well have helped, certainly it did not preclude, the great revival of national well-being, full-fed ease and even wanton luxury when Assyrian aggression on the rival states to the north relieved the upland kingdom for a time from its watchful strain. The national prosperity under Jeroboam II, under Uzziah, and again under Manasseh, gave the prophets constant occasion to rebuke the besetting sins of self-indulgence and of trade in which it is evident that the Israelites had now begun to compete actively with the Canaanites, so that Jerusalem had come to have the air of a commercial metropolis in Judea. The "goodman" who, putting trading zeal above domestic security, "has gone with a bag of money on a long journey and will return at an appointed time" had become proverbially familiar. Ahab is found negotiating for 'streets', that is, bazaars at Damascus. It would seem that Jerusalem had never been gayer than when Isaiah and the oppressed peasant pilgrims to her shrines saw her people bedecked and dancing to their ruin.

Yet the fire which Solomon's temple had kindled in the heart of Israel was quenched neither by Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of it, nor by the division or conquest of what had been his kingdom, nor by the material ruin of his people, nor even by foreign captivity. It is the fortune of wise leaders of the people to lay foundations for more than they realize, and they are justly to be

honored for fruitful experiment as well as for prescient vision. Solomon's political statecraft was fatally defective; his moral statesmanship proved supremely wise. His motives at the outset may well have been personal and political as well as religious. Perhaps even to the end his keenest gratification in the temple was that in it he had excelled the splendor which any neighbor state had accorded to the cult of its divinity and had emulated the pomps with which mightier sovereigns had sought supernatural favors for their people and their palaces. No doubt he regarded the temple as in a sense his as well as Jahveh's, an adjunct, however important and essential, to the home and offices of royalty. No doubt, too, for many years a considerable body of his people were of the same mind, clinging to the simpler and more adaptable ritual of the high-places, resenting the foreign guards at the temple and the foreign ministrants at the sacrifices as well as the taxes and levies by which a folk, chiefly agricultural and pastoral, had been constrained to minister to unwonted and seldom seen magnificence. Indeed, it has been thought that some premonitory exhibition or anticipation of such resentment may have been among the causes which had held David from so normal an expression of royal policy as was the building of a temple in an age when kings seemed peculiarly close to supernatural powers. And yet if men are to bear the burden of the unforeseen consequences of their acts they may claim honor from these also. Solomon did, indeed, strain the resources of his own people to the breaking-point to give prestige to the royal line, dignity to the royal city, and splendor to the royal cult. Immediately, the material result of this for his people, his line and his temple was disastrous. Ultimately, it was because of the moral outcome of this that the instinct of the world pronounced him wise.

Generations to whom *Ægis Potami* is not even a shadowy memory have revered Pericles for the Parthenon. Those to whom the revolt of Israel from Rehoboam is a tale without meaning connect instinctively, indissolubly and rightly, Solomon's temple with the development of a monotheistic conviction which, by the voice of prophetic seers, was to expand the unique Sion into a shrine of humanity and make Jerusalem a holy city for the

world. That localizing a cult should make it ecumenical is a paradox, but it is clear, as George Adam Smith<sup>2</sup> has said, that the worship of one Jahveh, spiritual and not idolatrous, was for Israel, at that stage and in that environment, practicable only through a preëminent temple. For other races it seems to have been practicable only with Israel as a teacher.

Thus Solomon's building of the temple was cardinal in the development of ecumenical ethics and religion. The time was critical. It would be hard to name another generation in the ancient life of the Nearer East when there had been or when there was again to be a chance for the one nation that held the potentiality to seize it, to provide through the prestige of wealth and the security of peaceful power an environment, so helpful that it seems indeed essential, for the germinating of new spiritual conceptions. Solomon made possible the ripening in nobler souls of ideas which still endure with vitality to move the world. The hour found a king of royal mind. He gave the means: the seers rose to the opportunity. In a higher sense than the legend-builders knew, Solomon had been wise.

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<sup>2</sup> *Jerusalem*, II: 13.